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Security Council

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6 April 1999

RESOLUTION 1233 (1999)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3991st meeting,
on 6 April 1999

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolution of 21 December 1998 (S/RES/1216 (1998)) and the statements of its President of 6 November 1998 (S/PRST/1998/31), 30 November 1998 (S/PRST/1998/35) and 29 December 1998 (S/PRST/1998/38),

Gravely concerned at the security and humanitarian situation in Guinea-Bissau,

Expressing its firm commitment to preserving the unity, sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Guinea-Bissau,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 17 March 1999 (S/1999/294) and the observations contained therein,

Noting with appreciation the formal undertaking by the President of Guinea-Bissau and the leader of the Self-Proclaimed Military Junta on 17 February 1999 never again to resort to arms (S/1999/173),

Welcoming the establishment and swearing-in on 20 February 1999 of the new Government of National Unity in Guinea-Bissau which constitutes a significant step forward in the peace process,

Noting with concern that serious obstacles continue to hamper the effective functioning of the new Government, including in particular, the failure of civil servants and other professional cadres seeking refuge in other countries to return,

Welcoming the deployment of troops constituting the Interposition Force of the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) by States in the region to implement their peacekeeping mandate and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Guinea-Bissau pursuant to the Abuja Agreement of 1 November 1998 (S/1998/1028, annex),

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Reiterating the need to conduct general and presidential elections pursuant to the Abuja Agreement and in accordance with national constitutional requirements as soon as possible, and noting the expression by the parties of their firm interest in having elections held as soon as possible,

1. Reiterates that the primary responsibility for achieving lasting peace in Guinea-Bissau rests with the parties and strongly calls upon them to implement fully all the provisions of the Abuja Agreement and subsequent undertakings;

2. Commends the parties for the steps taken so far in the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, in particular the establishment of the new Government of National Unity, and strongly urges them to adopt and implement all measures necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of the new Government and all other institutions, including in particular confidence-building measures and measures to encourage the early return of refugees and internally displaced persons;

3. Commends also the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and leaders in and outside the region, in particular the President of the Republic of Togo in his capacity as Chairman of ECOWAS, for the key role they are playing to bring about national reconciliation and to consolidate peace and security throughout Guinea-Bissau;

4. Expresses its appreciation to those States which have already provided assistance for the deployment of ECOMOG in Guinea-Bissau;

5. Reiterates its urgent appeal to all States and regional organizations to make financial contributions to ECOMOG, including through the United Nations trust fund established to support peacekeeping in Guinea-Bissau, to provide technical and logistical support to assist ECOMOG to carry out its peacekeeping mandate and to help facilitate the full implementation of all the provisions of the Abuja Agreement, and to that end invites the Secretary-General to consider convening a meeting in New York with the participation of ECOWAS in order to assess the needs of ECOMOG and to examine ways in which contributions could be mobilized and channelled;

6. Calls upon the parties concerned promptly to agree on a date for the holding of elections as soon as possible which are all-inclusive, free and fair, and invites the United Nations and others to consider, as appropriate, providing any needed electoral assistance;

7. Supports the decision of the Secretary-General to establish a Post-Conflict Peace Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) under the leadership of a Representative of the Secretary-General (S/1999/233) which will provide the political framework and leadership for harmonizing and integrating the activities of the United Nations system in Guinea-Bissau during the transitional period leading up to general and presidential elections and will facilitate, in close cooperation with the parties concerned, ECOWAS, ECOMOG as well as other national and international partners, the implementation of the Abuja Agreement;

8. Encourages all agencies, programmes, offices and funds of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as other international partners to lend their support to UNOGBIS and to the Representative of the Secretary-General in order to establish, together with the Government of Guinea-Bissau, a comprehensive, concerted and coordinated approach to peace-building in Guinea-Bissau;

9. Reiterates the need for the simultaneous disarmament and encampment of ex-belligerent troops, welcomes the progress made by ECOMOG in that regard, and strongly urges the parties to continue to cooperate through the Special Commission established for that purpose, to conclude expeditiously these tasks and to create conditions for the reunification of the national armed and security forces;

10. Emphasizes the need for urgent demining of affected areas to pave the way for the return of refugees and displaced persons and for the resumption of agricultural activities, encourages ECOMOG to continue its demining activities and calls upon States to provide the necessary assistance for demining;

11. Calls upon all concerned to respect strictly the relevant provisions of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, to ensure safe and unimpeded access by humanitarian organizations to those in need and to ensure the protection and freedom of movement of United Nations and international humanitarian personnel;

12. Reiterates its appeal to States and organizations concerned to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and refugees;

13. Welcomes the planned round-table conference of donors on Guinea-Bissau to be held in Geneva on 4-5 May 1999, under the sponsorship of UNDP, to mobilize assistance for, inter alia, humanitarian needs, consolidation of peace and socio-economic rehabilitation of Guinea-Bissau;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Security Council regularly informed and to submit a report to it by 30 June 1999 and every 90 days thereafter on developments in Guinea-Bissau, the activities of UNOGBIS and the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, including the implementation by ECOMOG of its mandate;

15. Decides to remain seized of the matter.